

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐
no ☐

Property Name: 15 East Bel Air Avenue Inventory Number: HA-2187
Address: 15 E. Bel Air Avenue Historic district: ☐ yes ☒ no
City: Aberdeen Zip Code: 21001 County: Harford
USGS Quadrangle(s): Aberdeen
Property Owner: Stephen M. Wright and Krista D. Wright Tax Account ID Number: 02001713
Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 2070 Tax Map Number: 204
Project: Aberdeen MARC Station Parking Expansion Agency: MTA
Agency Prepared By: JMA, Inc. for MTA
Preparer's Name: Katherine L. Farnham Date Prepared: 8/7/2008

Documentation is presented in: Maryland Real Property Database; US Census; Aberdeen Centennial Almanac 1992; Richard F. Cronin - History of Aberdeen, 1976; C.G. Cronin - Sketches of Village to Town to City, 2006; C. M. Wright - Our Harford Heritage, 1967.

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:

Name of the District/Property: _____

Inventory Number: _____ Eligible: ☐ yes ☐ no Listed: ☐ yes ☐ no

Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no Name: _____ Date: _____

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

The building at 15 East Bel Air Avenue is located on a mid-sized lot a short distance east of the Amtrak right-of-way. It is set close to the street with a paved driveway on its east side and a large grassy yard in back. One large tree stands at the west front corner, but there is no other vegetation. A chain-link fence encloses the west side yard and much of the rear yard. Narrow concrete sidewalks surround the building and connect to a paved area in the back yard. Immediately west of the building is a gravel road and vacant lots adjacent to the railroad tracks, and another dwelling stands to the east.

This building is a two-story front-gabled wood-frame dwelling, set on a low stucco foundation. It has a long, deep front section and a shorter rear section, which is stepped down approximately six inches from the main block. The building is clad in vinyl clapboard siding and has an asphalt-shingled roof with a modern octagonal gable vent. The eaves are short and boxed in with modern vinyl cladding. Due to vacancy, nearly all of the building's doors and windows are boarded up. It is currently configured as a double house with paired front doors on the first and second floors of the primary façade. First and second-floor front porches that once provided access to these doors have been removed, and horizontal wooden boards across the façade indicate the locations of the second-floor porch and its roof. The façade is four bays wide, with two doors flanked by one window on each

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Eligibility recommended ☐ Eligibility not recommended ☒

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MHT Comments:

Jim Janowski
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

[Signature]
Reviewer, National Register Program

2/23/09

Date

3/4/09

Date

200900312

side. This fenestration is identical on the first and second floors. The eastern door on the first floor is a modern aluminum-clad six-panel door; all other openings on the front are covered. A modern poured concrete pad extends the full width of the front.

The main block of the building is three bays deep on its east side and four bays deep on its west side. A concrete stoop near the center of the east wall indicates the former location of a door, now covered by siding. A boarded-up door opening is present in the corresponding location on the west wall of the building. The rear gable of the main block is visible above the roof of the back wing, and has stucco siding.

The rear wing is two bays long and three bays wide at the rear. Its roof has a lower pitch and a modern octagonal gable vent. The first floor has a boarded-up door on the east half of the building, and one window on each half. The second floor has a window on the east half of the building and a modern fiberglass-clad six-panel door on the west half of the building. Remains of a modern wooden exterior stairway and deck are attached to the building in front of the door.

This double dwelling and the double dwelling immediately to the east (21-23 East Bel Air Avenue) were located on what was a primary cross-route through Aberdeen until relatively recent times. The adjacent railroad served as a boundary between downtown Aberdeen, laid out in an original grid plan, and the Halls Crossroads area east of the tracks which eventually was incorporated into the town and known as East Aberdeen. East Bel Air Avenue contained a number of fine late nineteenth century single houses belonging to prominent individuals in the town. The two double houses formed a buffer between these single houses on large lots to the east, and two one-story commercial properties to the west, with the railroad crossing just west of the commercial buildings. Based on census listings, the double houses appear to have been the home of several working-class tenants, contrasted with the larger owner-occupied houses to the east. Historic maps provide few clues as to the construction date of these two houses, but Maryland Real Property Tax Database indicates that 15 East Bel Air Avenue was constructed ca. 1850. At least one early twentieth century streetscape photograph shows a distant fragmentary view of the building and its porch looking east across the railroad crossing. There is no physical or documentary evidence to suggest this was a commercial property, although it is possible.

Until the early 1980s, East Bel Air Avenue was connected to the core of Aberdeen with an at-grade railroad crossing. Around 1982, the current vehicle viaduct crossing and pedestrian bridge were constructed, which eliminated the street crossing but turned East Bel Air Avenue into a dead-end road, cutting it off both physically and visually from the downtown core. The last of the two historic commercial buildings was demolished in 1985, leaving a vacant lot and gravel road between the railroad alignment and 15 East Bel Air Avenue. The most recent use for the building was as residential apartments, but it has been vacant for some time.

Overall, the house has lost nearly all of its integrity due to removal of porches, chimneys, and original exterior fabric, the covering of the walls, eaves, and at least one door opening with modern siding, and the replacement and/or boarding up of the remaining windows and doors. Virtually no historic fabric is visible at present, and significant changes have occurred to the setting, notably the elimination of the nearby grade crossing, construction of the tall viaduct and pedestrian bridge, installation of parking lots, demolition of the buildings to the west and across the street, and construction of two modern apartment complexes nearby. This house appears to have been a working-class double dwelling with a front porch, but all stylistic attributes which might provide insight into its history and original appearance have disappeared. Research has not linked the house to anyone significant in the history of Aberdeen and Harford County. Given the building's lack of both integrity and association with important people, events and trends of the past, it is recommended not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

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Eligibility recommended _____

Eligibility not recommended _____

Criteria: A B C D Considerations: A B C D E F G

MHT Comments:

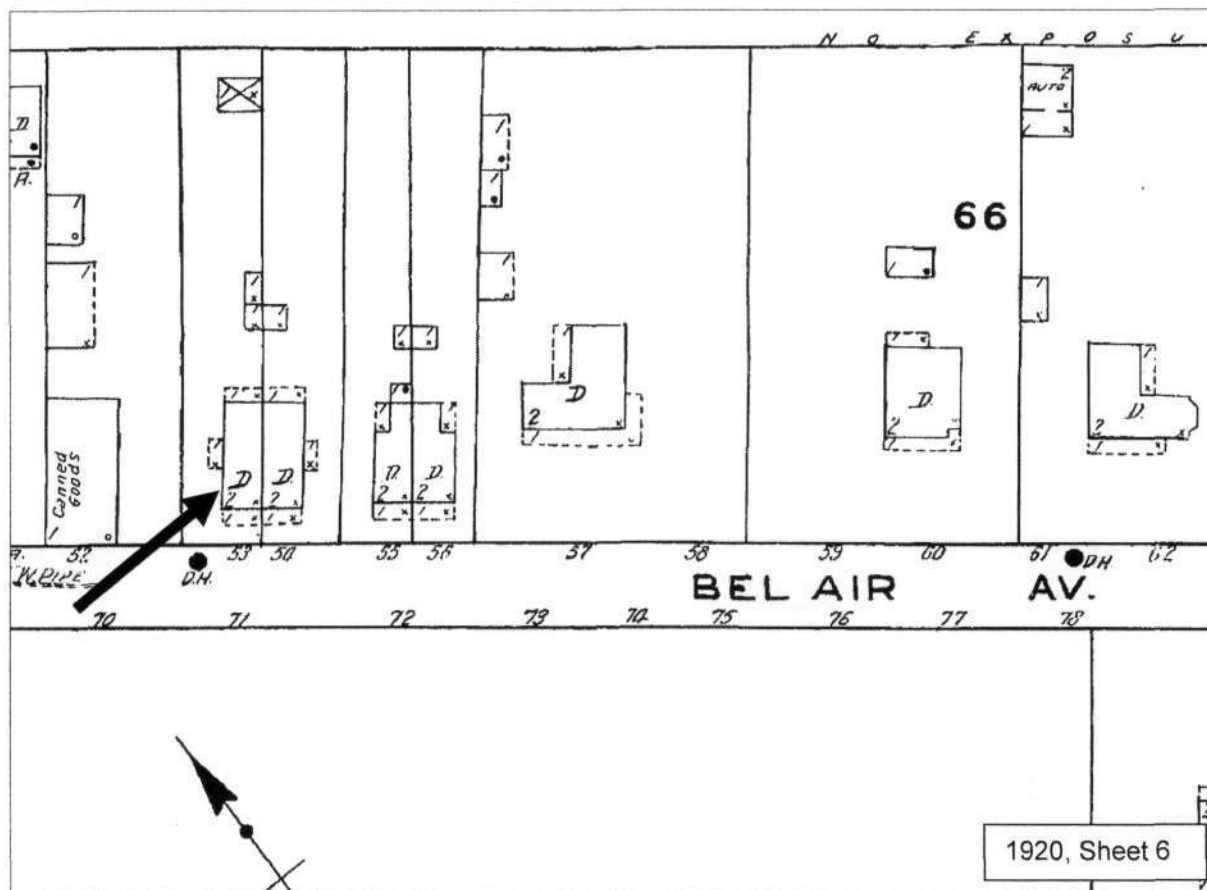
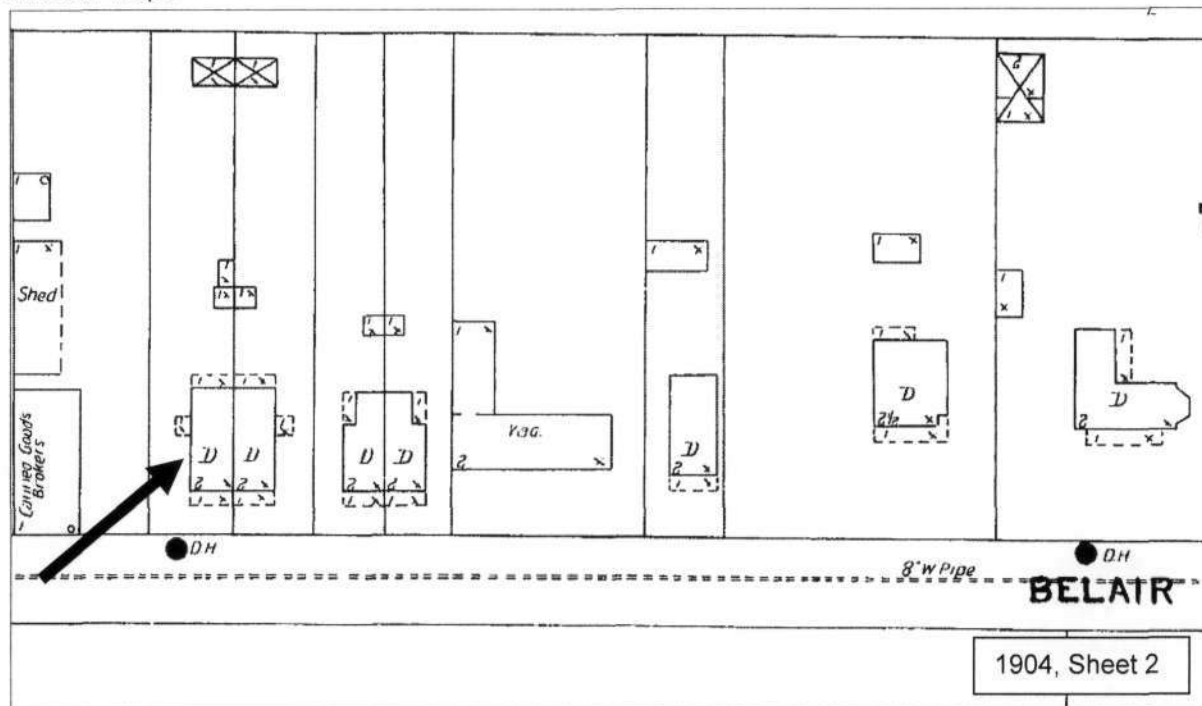
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

Date

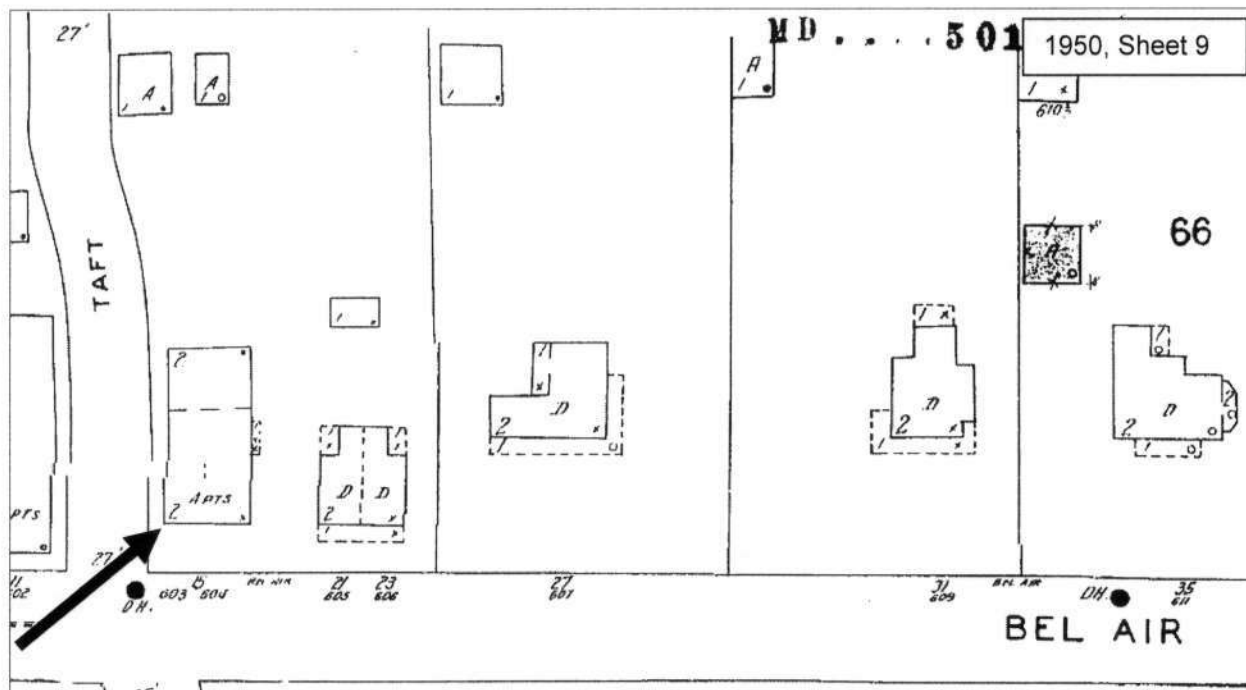
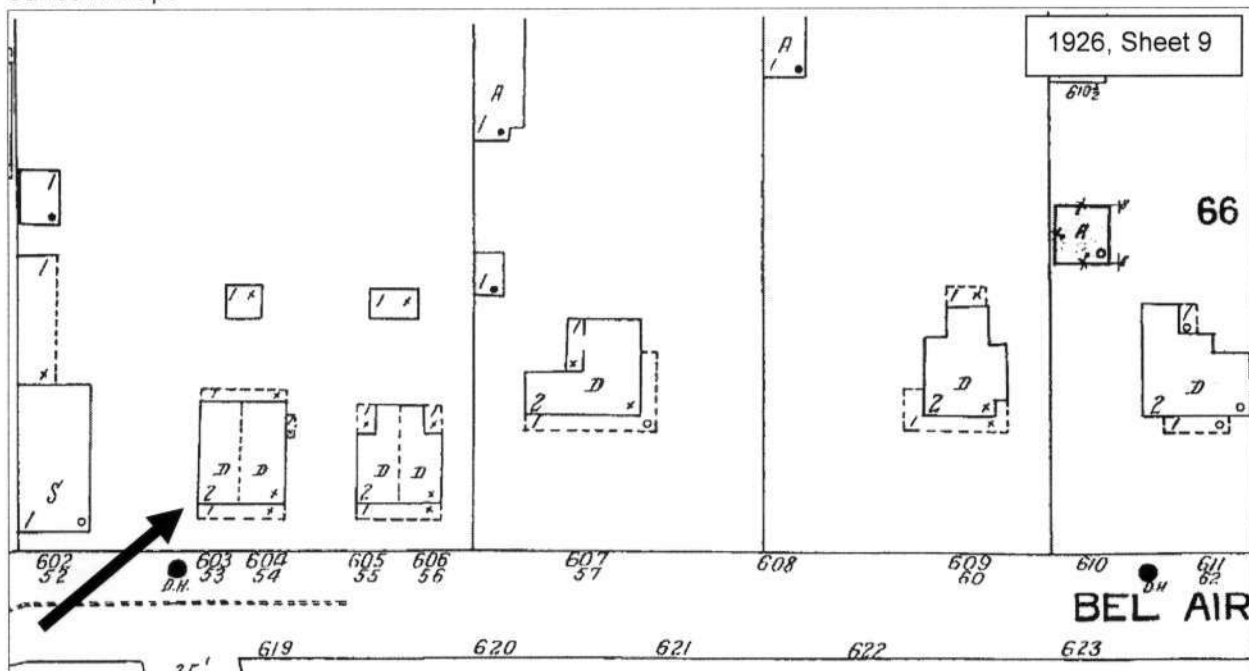
Reviewer, National Register Program

Date

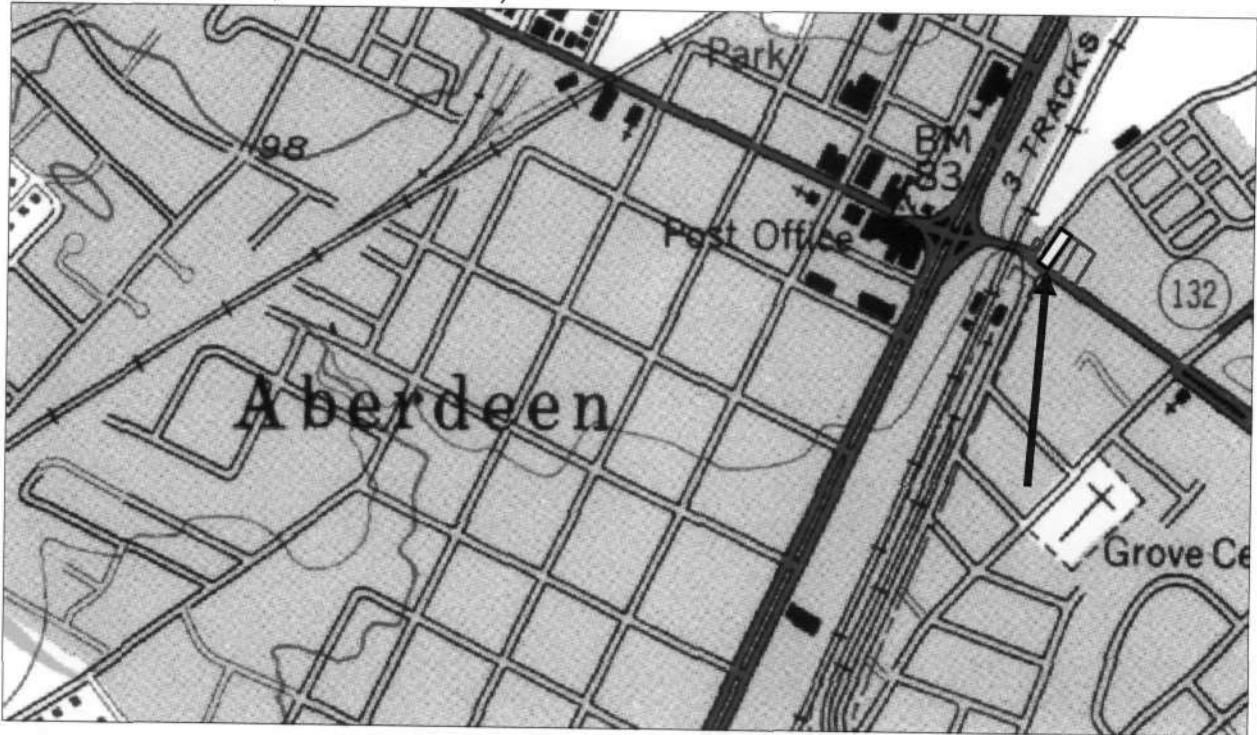
HA-2187
15 East Bel Air Avenue
Sanborn Maps



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15 East Bel Air Avenue
Sanborn Maps

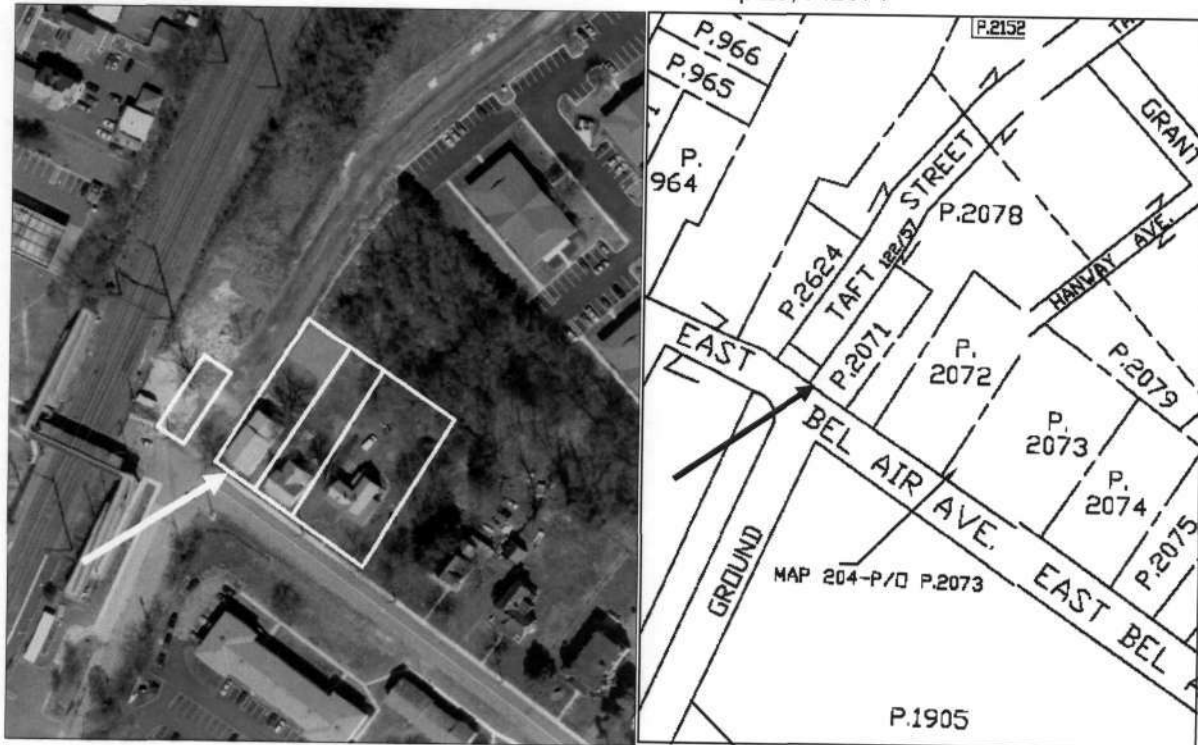


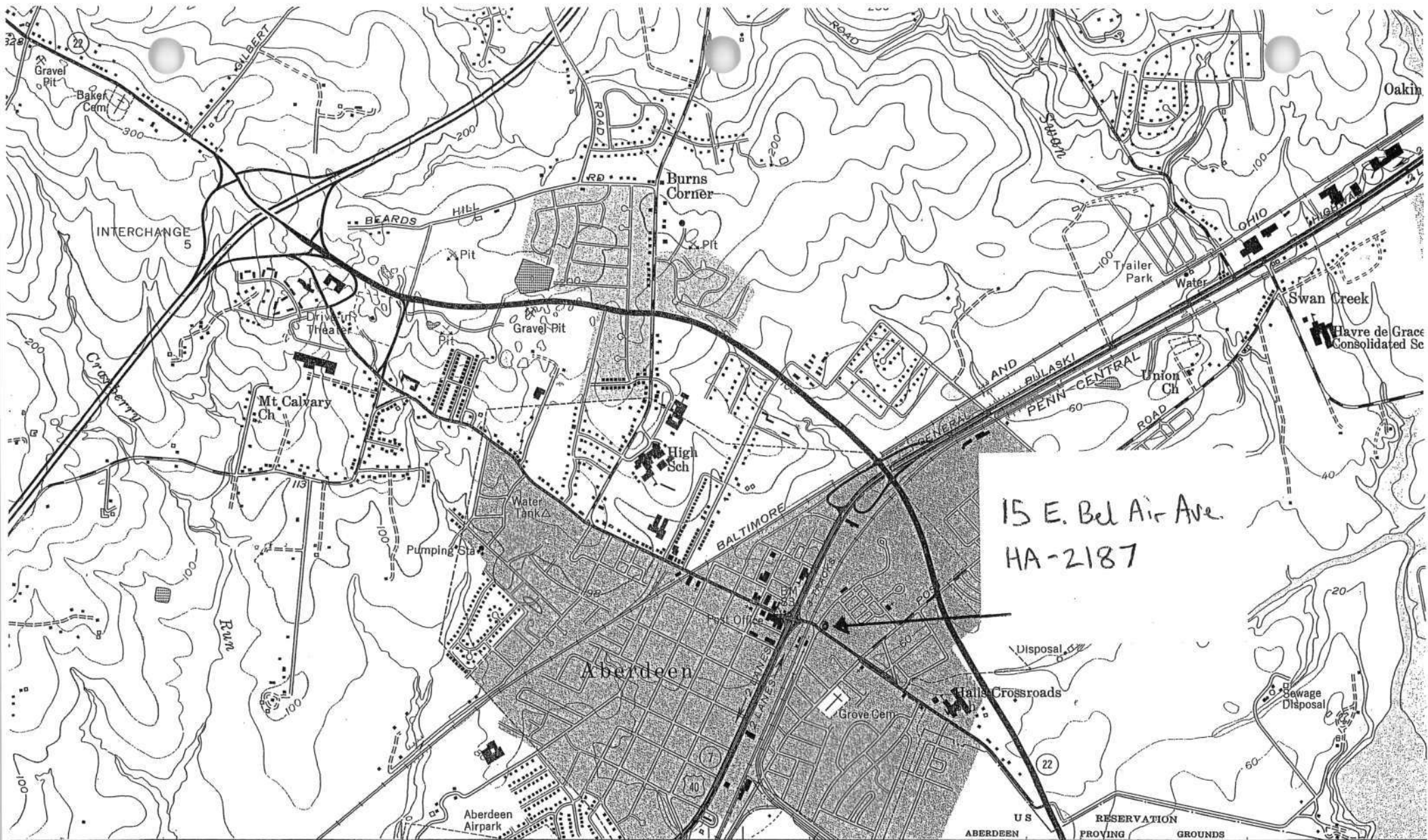
HA-2187
15 East Bel Air Avenue
Aberdeen quad, 1953 (Photorevised 1985)



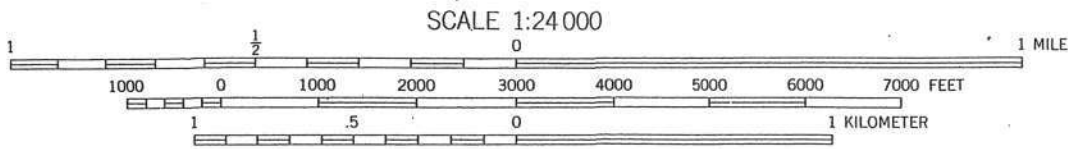
National Web Map Service 6" OPM, 2007-08

Tax Map 25, P.2071





15 E. Bd Air Ave
HA-2187



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	4 LANE 6 LANE	Light-duty
Medium-duty	4 LANE 6 LANE	Unimproved

U. S. Route State Route

ABERDEEN,
SW/4 HAVRE DE GRACE 15' G



HA-2187

15 East Bel Air Ave., Aberdeen
Harford County, MD

K. Farnham

August 2008

MD SHPO

Front facade, view to N

1 of 2



HA-2187

15 East Bel Air Ave., Aberdeen

Hartford Co., MD

K. Farnham

August 2008

MD SHPO

Rear + side, view to S

#2 of 2